5: Porter T-5 (1812-1814)1823
OX6 Marquesas OX6

owe the fairness of our skin entirely to the colour of that luminary. They are sensible that England and America are two distinct countries, or rather islands, or *valleys* situated in the same island; and they were astonished, that while the two *tribes* were at war we should suffer our prisoners to live.

No people are more strongly attached to their soil than the natives of Nooaheevah; no persuasions whatever, no offers of reward (not even of whales' teeth) can induce them to leave their beloved island, their friends, and relations. And the only times that I ever discovered anger strongly marked on their countenances, was when, for my amusement, I proposed to their children or brothers to take them to America. Indeed I should have been glad that one or two of their young men would have consented to go with me, if I had been certain of having it in my power to return them to their native island. But the apprehension that this might not be the case, prevented my being so solicitous as I otherwise should have been. It is true, they have not the same aversion to leaving their island to search for other lands. But they are taught by traditions that those are not the countries of white men, they are islands abounding in bread-fruit, cocoa-nuts, tarra, kava, and such other productions as are to them in higher estimation than any other; they are the lands belonging to the great nation of which they make a part, who speak the same language, with slight variations, have the same religion and customs, use the same arms and ornaments, and are disseminated among the innumerable islands scattered about the Pacific Ocean. A Nooaheevan, a Sandwich islander, an Otaheitan, and a New Zealander, are all of the same nation, and their language and appearance do not differ so much as those of the people of the different counties of England.

It has been seen by the traditionary accounts given me by Gattanewa, that Oataia and Ovanova his wife came from an island called Vavao (somewhere below Nooaheevah) and peopled this island. It is said he brought with him a variety of plants, and that his forty children, with the exception of one, (Po, or night,) were named after those plants. Among the group of the Friendly Islands is a fine island called Vavao, which produces every thing in common with Tongataboo, and the other islands of the group; the productions of which differ little from those of Nooaheevah.

On the 9th of December, I had all my provisions, wood, and water on board, my decks filled with hogs, and a most abundant supply of cocoa-nuts and bananas, with which we had been furnished by the liberality of our Nooaheevan friends, who had reserved for us a stock of dried cocoa-nuts, suitable for taking to sea, and calculated for keeping three or four months.

12: Sullivan D-4 (no date) 1923 OX6 Marquesas OX6

The story of the Marquesan population is the story of the Hawaiian and other Polynesian populations. From the data in Table I, supplied to me by Handy, it will be seen that in the course of the last 150 years the estimated population has shrunk from about 100,000 to less than 2,000. Handy says:[1]

> The condition of the health of the modern Marquesan is most distressing. I speak without exaggeration when I say that I doubt if there is a wholly sound physical specimen of a Marquesan alive. The principal diseases that are rampant are leprosy, syphilis, elephantiasis, a very rapid wasting pulmonary tuberculosis called *pokoko*, tubercular trouble in the throat, glands, and intestines, and deep ulcers and carbuncles. Dental caries is common.

In view of the theories of a Caucasoid origin of the Polynesian peoples it is likewise very desirable to keep clearly in mind the possibilities and probabilities of modern intermixture.

> From 1800 to 1838 there were only a few deserters from whalers. In 1838 the Catholic missionaries arrived and the French took possession of Nuku Hiva, Ua Pou, and Ua Huka. A small French colony with a maximum population of 100 was established. The white population probably never exceeded 100 in the whole group. Today it consists of about a dozen Catholic fathers and sisters and about twenty others. In 1880 a group of Cantonese Chinese were brought into the islands. It is probable that there were never more than 100 in the islands. There are now about thirty. Native women used to marry freely with the Chinese but the intermarriage ceased about ten years ago. The reason for the number of part Chinese today is not the number of Chinese immigrants, but the fact that the half-Chinese are sturdy, healthy, and good breeders. They resist the diseases that take off the natives and half whites.

Another point of interest is Handy's statement to the effect that the Marquesans are very accurate in remembering ancestry and as a general thing showed neither desire to conceal nor to boast of white blood if they had it. It is not a matter either for pride or shame. The amount of unadmitted modern white blood in our series is very probably negligible.

TABLE 1.—THE POPULATION OF THE MARQUESAS

DATE OF CENSUS	ESTIMATED POPULATION
1. Prehistoric:	Estimated to have been between 50,000 and 100,000, fluctuating with periods of plenty and famine.
2. 1773:	Cook estimated 50,000 for three southeastern islands. About 100,000 for the entire group.
3. 1804:	Krusenstern estimated 16,000 for Nuku Hiva. About 50,000 for entire group.
4. 1838:	Dupetit-Thouars estimated 20,000 for the entire group.
5. 1856:	Jouan estimated 12,500 for entire group.
6. 1867:	Lawson manuscript gives 7,411 for entire group.
7. 1884:	Clavel estimated 4,865 distributed as follows:

[1] Personal communication.

/17 cont./ 856 757
role in adolescent and adult sex life. The medications administered are astringents which are also believed to possess cleansing qualities. They are intended, according to informants, to shrink the mucus membrane lining of the vaginal canal and generally aid in increasing muscle tone of the coccygeo-gluteal muscles. Furthermore, they are believed to inhibit the production of lubricatory fluids (vai to'e) in the vaginal canal and to suppress vaginal malodorousness. Administered after birth, they also cleanse the vagina of the female infant of superfluous dried mucus and effluviae after birth. The results attributed to these medications -- decrease in size of vaginal canal, increased muscle tone and inhibition [832]
of mucus production, and /18/ suppression of malodorousness -- are of major importance as qualifications for a sexual partner. These qualities are most frequently mentioned when males discuss the relative sexual merits of women. The Marquesans 186 ●
believe that women from Tahiti and white women in general 757
are possessed of rather large genitalia and endowed with a 856
superfluity of vaginal secretions which Marquesans regard as 826
contributing to malodorousness. The use of the astringents enumerated below supposedly raises the Marquesan women far above the level of either Tahitians or Whites in terms of their physical attributes for the sex act.

The astringents used are several in number; the plant 757
sources of many occur only in isolated areas and hence are 856
limited in their distribution.

tuei'au (Antidesma sp. ?). The leaves are pounded and mixed with a small amount of water. This mixture is then strained through cloth and 1 or 2 drops placed daily in the vagina after the child has been bathed. This can be begun as soon as the child starts to crawl, but not before. This particular medication is very common in the valley of Hatiheu on the north coast of Nuku Hiva. The only known stand of the tueiau is in the valley of Ha'atuatua, near Natiheu on the crest of ridge forming the

/73 cont./

Aboriginal Obscenities

192
831

'u moeka	sleeping mat (regarded as a particularly vicious expression, as the sleeping mat was the lowest thing in a house, being walked on by everyone)
kio'e pe	"rotten or decayed rat"
'upoko pe	"rotten or decayed head" (the head was the seat of supernatural power) [826]
'o'o pe	"rotten or decayed brain"
to roro!	"Your brain!"

At present, such terms absolutely fail to evoke any reaction among younger Marquesans and even older individuals [178] do not regard them as seriously as they did 20 years ago. The 192 coarse language of the modern Marquesas, more concerned with 177 sexual matters, has assumed a certain European, if not down- 831 right Anglo-Saxon flavor. The verb "to copulate" -- titoi -- is used as in an exclamatory fashion, much the same way as our four-letter equivalent. It is not used adjectivally or nominally as in English, however. The same verb, titoi, is also used in its Tahitian meaning -- to draw back the foreskin -- with an appropriate hand motion. The Marquesan synonym pauheke (or paupauheke -- to masturbate) is /74/ also employed in the same fashion. All of the above are used as expressions of [578] annoyance and are regarded as grave insults when uttered in the context of an argument. Such terms are used frequently in non-mixed company, in jest, however, without provoking any wrath.

Marquesan obscenity also reflects the heavy concentra- 192 tion on genital hygiene so characteristic of the culture. Ap- 831 pellations of pi'au'ota (your stinking foreskin), hoki i te mimi [181] (smells like urine); or pi'au i te puta keo (stinking anus) are common and considered to be quite grave.

There is a great deal of Marquesan folklore about the 186 515 personal hygiene of the French, and it is suspected, most other 649 white ethnic groups. [538]

/74 cont./ 186 515 648 [154]

white ethnic groups. This is a culture contact phenomonon, arising from the need of the natives to act out their animosity toward the European intruders. As few white visitors ever learn more than a few words of the native language, it is quite safe for the natives to refer to white visitors by terms such as those listed above. I have seen Marquesans return the greetings of French and American tourists with such appellations, displaying perfect poker faces all the while. Much is made of "lax" European bathing habits; to escape disapprobation, one must bathe as frequently and as thoroughly as the Marquesans and be extremely careful of perspiration odor.

Skin eruptions are very common among the Marquesans, providing a further source for terms of insult. Some of the most common are: 164 192 578

/75/ puna — an eruption characterized by itching and peeling of the skin, often in the groin, but found on the rest of the body as well (also known as Sekaseka or senga senga - Samoan?)

tane' — an eruption characterized by slight depigmentation, arising in spots and spreading over large areas

mama — an eruption characterized by numerous small round hard blisters developing on the lower legs and ankles, resembling in their appearance and order the chitons (mama) which appear on the rocks along the shore. [136]

All these diseases are considered quite contagious (rere), especially as a result of sexual intercourse. References are commonly made to a newly developed skin condition as having come from a particular sexual episode. Those whose mates or lovers are afflicted with any of these diseases are subjected to severe ridicule at times, as the diseases, although common, are thought to be somewhat distasteful. 169 578 [833] [753]

Conspicuously absent in the Marquesan obscene vocabulary are references to female relatives of the addressed. Having 192 602 831